



**Norfolk and Norwich
University Hospitals**
NHS Foundation Trust



Stepping In and Stepping Up

**Covid-19 Home Testing Service
Improves Capacity, Accessibility and
Patient Flow**

November 09, 2020



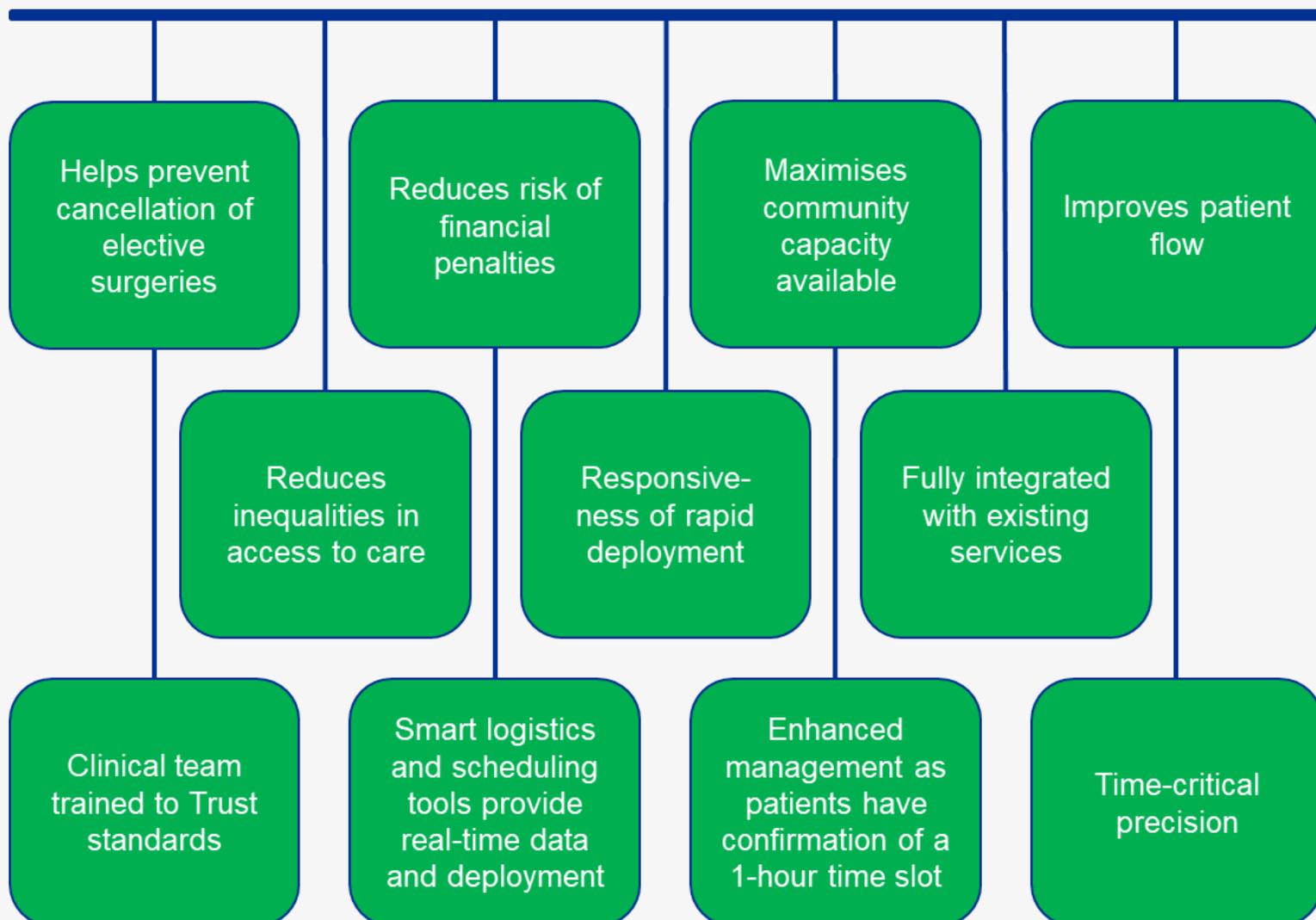
HomeLink Healthcare Ltd
www.homelinkhealthcare.co.uk

From October 2020, HomeLink Healthcare have provided additional capacity to Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NNUHT), preventing cancellations of elective surgery by offering Covid-19 screening at home.

HomeLink Healthcare has delivered a new pre-elective Covid screening pathway for housebound patients, helping NHS hospitals and Trusts avoid financial penalties from surgeries being cancelled and further reducing inequalities in access to care.

This case study shows how capacity challenges were overcome, whilst accessibility and patient flow were improved, with rapid responsiveness and time-critical precision.

HomeLink Healthcare Covid Pathway Benefits:



NHS capacity, accessibility and patient flow challenges overcome

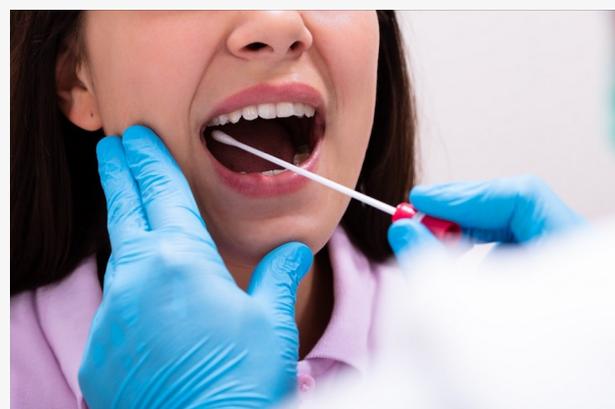
As part of the third phase of the NHS response to Covid-19, there is a requirement to restore and recover NHS services, whilst overcoming increased demands and capacity constraints.

The need for patients to be screened for Covid and then self-isolate 72 hours prior to elective hospital admission is critical to ensuring that elective surgery can go ahead as planned.

Challenges with accessibility to Covid testing risks cancelled electives.

NHS Trusts need to accelerate the return of non-Covid health services, which will help address the growing waiting lists for elective procedures. Therefore, it is imperative to overcome any challenges with capacity, accessibility and flow.

Housebound patients are unable to get to Covid testing sites which is where HomeLink Healthcare can help.



Additional capacity provided by a trusted partner to prevent cancellations.

Norfolk and Norwich Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NNUHT) asked HomeLink Healthcare to provide urgent additional capacity for Covid home testing, to prevent cancellations in elective surgery.

HomeLink Healthcare were already providing a service to the Trust, NNUH at Home, procured through the SBS Patient Discharge Services Framework. This facilitated a rapid mobilisation and quick, accurate and responsive results. HomeLink Healthcare set up a fully functioning home testing service within 6 days, including training the clinical team to Trust standards.

Recognised as 'the most esteemed accolade of healthcare service excellence in the UK', HomeLink Healthcare were finalists for an HSJ Award for their partnership work with the NNUHT making them trusted partners with a proven track record.

Cursty Pepper, Emergency & Urgent Care Performance & Recovery Operations Director, reported:

“Having HomeLink to support us is fantastic as it means we have a trusted and experienced team supporting our elective patient pathway – this provides real peace of mind and their willingness to diversify and respond so quickly really has saved us from having to cancel operations so thank you HomeLink for stepping in and stepping up.”

Overcoming issues of patient flow for the maximum elective activity possible.

HomeLink Healthcare added an additional pathway to the core service delivering Covid testing in the community for housebound patients prior to pre-elective surgery.

To manage logistics and increase availability, HomeLink Healthcare called patients in advance and agreed a one-hour window for testing. This resolved the challenges reported by community teams of the patient not being at home on the agreed day.

To maximise responsiveness, HomeLink Healthcare used real-time data and analytics to provide same day reporting back to the Hospital Trust. Their advanced scheduling tools ensured that the clinical staff were deployed efficiently. As a result, patients were ready and available for their scheduled surgery.

Whole system benefits of HomeLink Healthcare Partnership

Smart logistics and specialist support provided the time-critical level of precision and quality required. The availability of tests across the whole CCG area helped reduce inequalities in access to care.

By providing Covid testing at home, HomeLink Healthcare prevented surgeries being cancelled at the last minute. This has a financial impact on the Trust avoiding penalties for not meeting targets in elective cases. This also increased capacity for the NNUHT team to focus on other important work, in the confidence that this service is being efficiently managed.

Due to the disruption caused by the pandemic, some patients may have been waiting longer than usual to access elective services. Being able to plan and maintain scheduled appointments is imperative to patient's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Jonny Lim, HomeLink Healthcare Project Manager, concluded

“We want to support the NHS Trusts, hospitals, and patients during this challenging time. This was a great example of how additional capacity, accessibility and patient flow can be deployed quickly, safely and reliably by our clinical team. It was excellent knowing that life-changing procedures could go ahead as planned and seeing the positive benefit this had on the patient's lives, as well as the teams involved.”



HomeLink Healthcare delivers hospital-based patient services at home, making healthcare systems more flexible, efficient and cost-effective. They provide expert face to face nursing and therapeutic care combined with new technologies to improve patient flow.

HomeLink Healthcare has clinical teams available immediately to assist NHS, CCGs, Community teams and private hospitals.

Please get in touch to discuss how HomeLink Healthcare can help.

andy.collett@homelinkhealthcare.co.uk

07984570844

HomeLink Healthcare Limited
Regal Court,
42-44 High Street, Slough, SL1 1EL
Tel: (020) 3137 5370

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